

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for exchanging documents in transactions between partners that are joined in an exchange network, the partners communicating with each other via a hub entity, the method  
5 comprising:

setting up an agreement associated with each document type for each partner that joins the exchange network;

placing in a file receive location a document from a first partner, the file receive location being password protected such that only a partner that provides a correct identity with any document it sends may place that document at the file receive location; and

performing steps, by the hub entity, including,

retrieving the document from the file receive location,

validating the document against its respective agreement,

mapping the document into a standard document the format of which being partner system platform neutral,

20 assigning a key to the document for future references,

processing the document based on the agreement, the process including applying rules of the hub entity and rules of the first partner.

mapping the processed document from the standard  
5 format into an altered document the format of which is associated with a second partner and sending the altered document to the second partner based on the corresponding agreement.

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